Installation Address

By

Fraser F. Fulton, O.B.E., B.Sc., M.E.I.C.

Chancellor, Sir George Williams University

On the occasion of his installation on

September 25, 1965

THE CHALLENGE OF THE CHANGING TIMES

Mr. Principal and Vice Chancellor, members of Convocation, Reverend Sirs, Honourable Representatives of Governments, Honoured Representatives of Sister Institutions, Distinguished representatives of Industry and Commerce, Students, Ladies and Gentlemen: –

I too wish to extend a welcome to you in the knowledge that your presence is a token of your esteem for Sir George Williams University and Schools and equally an indication of our mutual interest in the field of education.

I realize it is inadvisable to single out individuals for a special indication of appreciation. The dangers of omission are great and I do not wish to offend anyone. Nevertheless, I am particularly happy that my Mother is here to join in this Convocation. She was the second of four generations to attend Mount Allison. For this reason and others I am delighted to welcome my life long friend the immediate Past President of Mount Allison

and Senior Army Chaplain Overseas Dr. Ross Flemington, who will be kind enough, ultimately, to close this Convocation.

Also amongst old friends present I welcome another wartime colleague, one time member of our Board of Governors, now Chancellor of the University of Toronto, Dr. Omond Solandt. Carrying on in this area of personal friendships, I am particularly appreciative of the attendance today of Dr. John Stirling, Chancellor of Queen's University, and finally, but by no means least, another one time member of our Board of Governors, the Chancellor of my second Alma Mater, Dr. Howard Ross of McGill.

I would like also to pay tribute to a few of the many who are of such great help and assistance to me, and have been during my several terms as Chairman of the Board of Governors. I have in mind especially the Chancellor Emeritus Dr. B.W. Roberts, the two immediate Past Presidents of the Corporation of Sir George Williams University, Mr. Colin W. Webster and Mr. H. Roy Crabtree; and also Mr. Wilfred N. Hall who was General Chairman of our Campaign for funds for the Henry F. Hall Building. This, of course, could go on to cover a very lengthy list but I must stop being individualistic and group my thanks to the Members of the Corporation, the Members of the Board of Governors, the Faculty, the Administrative Staff and the Association of Alumni. All have been most co-operative and helpful in sharing the load.

Events such as this Convocation do not just happen. Many detailed arrangements must be made to ensure a good operation. The arrangements for this Convocation coincided with the fall registration thus imposing an additional burden on the Registrar. I extend our appreciation to the Registrar, Professor Peets, and his staff for ensuring the success of this special Convocation. Also our thanks to Captain Ham for making the Salvation Army Citadel available to us on this occasion.

Our thanks are extended also to the members of our honour society The Garnet Key who keep peace and good order so efficiently and charmingly at all official University functions. Their leadership is a source of inspiration to all members of the Student Body.

Finally, in this vein, I would like to say that as with most of you it is necessary that I earn a living. I do this, and have for

nearly four decades, with Northern Electric Company Limited. I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the generous attitude of the Board of Directors of that Company, and particularly that of its Chairman and President, General Holley Keefler, in permitting – indeed encouraging me in – devoting a considerable amount of Company time to my work in connection with the University.

The many greetings which have been extended to me verbally and by parchment are received with gratitude.

On behalf of Sir George Williams University I would ask that each bearer of greetings convey our sincere appreciation to those you represent who have had you honour us with your presence.

Needless to say, I am most appreciative of and at the same time feel most humble in being installed in the high office of Chancellor of this important and unique University. Important in the work we are doing – unique in our historic and continuous emphasis on providing educational opportunities in our Evening Division for people employed during the day.

In receiving this great honour I feel I cannot express my appreciation better than by quoting the words used by my esteemed friend and mentor, our Principal Emeritus Dr. Henry Hall on his installation as Principal in February 1957. He said; "this event is, of course, not primarily for me. I am on this occasion but a symbol. Institutions, if they be good, worthy and democratic are not determined or controlled by one person. Individuals come and go and the best contribution of the individual is so to build that the institution may better serve." My earnest hope is that I may be as successful in the discharge of the responsibilities of my office as Dr. Hall was in his.

I wish to speak at this Convocation on the general theme of "The Challenge of the Changing Times" more especially with reference to higher education in general and to Sir George Williams in particular.

Some of my more intimate friends may question my authority to speak on such an involved and complex subject. I hasten to

respond that I am not an authority but during the past few years I have had a good exposure at Sir George, at sister institutions and elsewhere to specialists in the field. In fact to specialists in the several fields involved, such as administration, faculty, teaching methods and procedures, student affairs and perhaps the most difficult of all – that of finance.

By good fortune the Principal and I were two of the twenty-two Canadians amongst twenty-two hundred university presidents, principals, deans, and distinguished educators who attended the annual conference of the American Association of Higher Education last March. It was, to me, most informative, enlightening, interesting and frightening. Many things are happening on the American Scene which I hope may never develop on the Canadian Campus. In these areas, mostly in the fields of personnel, I hope it is a case of forewarned is forearmed and we can take appropriate preventative measures. On the other hand, the majority of their problems are our problems and useful guidance was available and can be helpful.

These are the natures of exposure which qualify me, not as an authority, but as a reference to authority. In order to establish a few points I propose to load my oratorical shotgun with some pellets of pertinent quotations.

It is, I think, appropriate to illustrate the broad terms of the Challenge by quoting our Minister of Education the Honorable Paul Gérin-Lajoie who said in a speech last June "Throughout the world, this is the age of education. With the technical explosion, the advent of automation, the extension of recreation, we have made a rough entrance into an era where, even in the most simple areas of living, the fundamental law is: learn or perish. Today, whatever man discovers, whatever man achieves, he owes to his intelligence and his competence quite as much as to his courage and tenacity. The age of the unlettered genius and of the self-taught seer died with the little schoolhouse on the range."

The Minister of Education put it bluntly when he said "Learn or Perish" and that applies to us as individuals and as a nation.

To approach the problem a little more closely I would refer to an eminent educator well known to all of us. In the foreword to that searching analytical book "The University Question" by our good friend Willson Woodside, Dr. Cyril James, then Principal and Vice-Chancellor of McGill, wrote in 1958, over seven years ago: "Every young Canadian who is qualified will, I am certain, find a place at one institution or another. None will be turned away. But, if the people of Canada fail to provide at once the additional financial resources that are needed to enlarge teaching staffs and to construct additional buildings, the price of this expansion in student investment will be the standardization of university education in this country at a more mediocre level. Weary teachers in antiquated buildings, trying to teach excessive numbers of students, cannot be expected to attain great intellectual heights."

Just prior to the time Dr. James made that statement Sir George had opened its splendid new Kenneth E. Norris building and a sigh of relief was heard – but not for long. After a brief interval we found ourselves again relieving the pressure of ever increasing demands for higher education in apartments converted to classrooms and in facilities in the Downtown YMCA used for educational purposes never dreamed of by the architects of those buildings. Even rooms in the back of this edifice have been pressed into service.

A year hence we will open the great new Henry F. Hall building and again we will experience a measure of relief, but already we have raised our sights on capacity from the design figures of 3,000 day students and 7,000 evening students to anticipated usage figures of 5,000 day students and 8,000 evening students. Our comfort will not last long.

The Minister of Education said "Learn or perish" and Dr. James said "None will be turned away". During the recent registration this month we repeated the disheartening process of accepting 1,087 entrants to the first academic year in the Day Division. 3,872 qualified students had applied for entrance. 2,785 had been turned away. Similar waste of our country's greatest potential worth, our youth, was being experienced in every university in the land.

What has gone wrong?

We were well aware of the high birth rates following World War II. The student potential has been visible for twenty years. Very large sums of capital money have been provided by the taxpayer through Governments, by private industry (if such can be differentiated from the taxpayer), by philanthrophy and by foundations. Vast expansions have been made in the facilities on every campus. In general, there has been an adequate increase in fully qualified academic and administrative staff to meet the requirements of the new facilities. Operating expenses have been met by tuition fees, substantially supplemented by Government grants and private donations. Everything that should have been done appears to have been done yet we fall short by a typical ratio of 1,087 accepted to 3,872 who applied.

Dr. James's optimistic and possibly merely hopeful prophecy "None will be turned away" has not materialized by a very disturbing margin.

In my humble opinion two very important factors in planning were understandably underestimated, and I say this with the greatest respect for the ability of those who planned. The first factor was one of timing, the second was the phenomenal rate of growth of knowledge. The two are closely interrelated.

Let me deal with timing first – it is perhaps the simpler. Every time-related educational expansion program appears to have had a five year base. For fiscal purposes this is probably sound and certainly is as far ahead as one would wish to make commitments. But the five year base appears to have assumed other control factors. For example, the very excellent brief submitted by the Chamber of Commerce to the long overdue Bladen Commission on the Financing of Higher Education contains the statement "The steepest part of the growth curve of university needs is in the next five years during which time university enrolment is expected to double".

That is, undoubtedly, a very reasonable statement and one I think to be completely valid. Many similar statements have been made from time to time. The danger, I believe, lies in its secondary effect. It tends to make one feel if we can weather the storm for five years then the crises will have passed and all will be calm. The fault lies in the fact it is a constantly moving five

year period and although there may not be an actual doubling of the student potential every five years, I am quite satisfied the population explosion about which we hear so much will provide us with an ever increasing potential and an ever increasing facility and staff problem.

I do not wish to belabour this timing problem but I would like to refer to recent editorials which appeared in the Montreal Gazette, 22 Jul 65, and the Montreal Star, 29 Jul 65. In part The Gazette said: "--- in meeting the onrushing university needs there is not a year, or even a month, to be lost. There is no such thing as instant education. Providing the means to educate takes time as well as money. There is barely the time. Will there be the money?"

And the Star, again in part, said: "The time is overdue for Canadians to pay much more attention than they have in the past to what is their basic problem." The Editor then quotes Dr. Murray Ross, President of York University, to illustrate we now have university capacity for 20% of our 18 to 21 year olds compared with 43% in the United States, expanding by 1980 from 20% to 30% in Canada and from 43% to 60% in the United States.

The Star Editor then goes on to say :–

"This is a shocking statement. Its implications are, or should be, clear enough. In any age when skills depend more and more on education, we skimp on it. We are planning – deliberately planning – to educate at the university level just half the number of our youth who will get such education across the border."

"The hard fact is that we are not creating the opportunities for training that our neighbours do. We pay a price for it now. The price will rise steeply as the lag increases."

Both editors said much more, and most emphatically, but I think that which I have quoted adequately illustrates my point that Time is indeed of the essence.

The other planning element I have mentioned which in a sense has gone out of control is the rate of increase of knowledge. The Challenge of Changing Times to Higher Education

results from unprecedented advances in knowledge and its application.

Quantitative measures at best are only suggestive but it is probably correct to say that the application of science and technology in the last three centuries produced more changes in how men live and work than in the sixty centuries that preceeded them. It has been estimated that a doubling in the production of knowledge now occurs every ten years, and present trends indicate that more changes in how men live and work will occur during the next 35 years than were produced in all previous history. By the year 2000 there will be over a thousand times as much knowledge of all kinds than was available at the beginning of this century. Knowledge to record, to sift, to store, to search out, to teach about and, hopefully, to use with some discrimination and effectiveness.

It is the combination of changes in society from new knowledge and pressure to prepare people to utilize effectively an even greater flood of knowledge in the future which produces challenges to higher education.

The Challenges of Changing Times in the field of higher education are directed toward all elements of the University – the curriculum, the new education technologies, the processes of learning, the physical facilities, the faculty, the student body, the administration and, influencing all elements, the problems of finance.

I had proposed to consider briefly the effects of the Challenge on each of these higher education elements and the actions being taken to meet the various natures of challenge, but soon realized even the barest summary treatment would consume a great deal more time than is now available to us. Perhaps you will bear with me while I touch briefly on the Challenge which has such important bearing on meeting all other Challenges – the Challenge of Finance.

I said earlier that vast sums of capital money have been made available to universities resulting in tremendous expansion of physical facilities during the last decade. Similarly, substantial grants toward operating expense have assisted the universities in balancing their annual budgets. With respect to

both capital money and operating grants and in the light of what I have said and believe concerning the future, these two classifications of finance, although apparently generous, are almost hopelessly inadequate.

I can see the representatives of a beneficent Government shudder at my statement and perhaps be understandingly annoyed over my apparent lack of appreciation of their Herculean efforts on our behalf. I hasten to assure them and the Prime Minister of the Province of Quebec, the Minister of Education, and the Minister of Finance that I feel quite otherwise and wish to emphasize our gratification with their complete understanding of our financial problems and their fair and generous support in their solution. They have fiscal problems I would not care to try to solve. I am sure some of their priority problems which must all be encompassed within their revenue must be almost impossible of solution. The night before last I attended a Board meeting of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and faced the same government grant problem viewed in a completely different environment.

On behalf of the University, I sincerely express our very real gratitude to our Provincial Government for its financial support both capital and operating.

I wish also while in this vein to express the appreciation of the University for the excellent support of the very large number of corporations and individuals who made generous donations toward the capital requirements of the new Henry F. Hall Building. True we stand today about a half million dollars short of our objective but Mr. Wilfred Hall who, as I said earlier, was General Chairman of that campaign, and his stalwart assistants are confident the target will be, indeed must be, attained. To you here present who made contribution, our grateful thanks.

The big challenge of finance lies in the requirement for capital funds. Probably every university in the Country now has long range plans for facilities requiring vast amounts of capital. We are certainly amongst them except that our plans are short range as well. We have an immediate and most urgent requirement for a suitable library building, having in mind the library is the heart of any university.

Even with the Henry F. Hall Building coming into use next

year we will be short of classroom and laboratory space. We need now to get started on what might be called an Arts Building. Possibly the Library Building and the Arts Building could be combined for more effective use of land and capital.

We have had a justifiable clamour from the student body for some years for an Athletic Center. By skill and ingenuity they have managed to win national championships in many competitive sports but they cannot be fended off in their demand much longer. Such an Athletic Center could also serve as a student center which we sadly lack and would better enable us to conduct many of our classes in degree courses in physical education.

Substantially more money we must have, and soon. The challenge is where to find it. One important clue lies, I think, in the Chamber of Commerce submission to the Bladen Commission. It states, "Corporations can be grouped as belonging to the number that actively contribute to university campaigns, and the much larger number that do not appear to do so. If the minority find reasons to participate in such campaigns, it is probable that at least a substantial proportion of the non-participants can be persuaded to begin to contribute."

My own experience indicates the Chamber of Commerce view to be completely valid and I am equally certain the same view applies to individuals.

The money is existent. The challenge is to obtain it. In our case we must obtain it and with the assistance of Divine Providence and many willing workers we will have our Arts and Library Buildings and our Athletic Center and many more required facilities to meet the Challenges of the years to come.

There is one other challenge to higher education I would like to touch on briefly. That is the challenge to that very nebulous factor commonly known as academic freedom. An eminent University Principal said recently:–

"One might fear that with dependence on provincial grants our universities may be pressured to ensure that such funds are spent on students who are native to the province concerned. What a deplorable possibility if the learning opportunities and personal development that come from the presence of students from other

lands in each of our institutions should be drastically reduced. And what hope for building understanding and co-operation throughout Canada if students from other provinces should be expected to pay a premium if they study elsewhere than in their own province.

Similarly, I am sure we would all view with grave concern any such pressure which would influence our curriculum or any area of our truly academic functions, which would standardize us. A university to be truly a university must have and retain an academic character and standing of its own, with complete freedom within itself to accept the Challenge to High Education, and discharge its responsibilities to the students and to our nation accordingly.

So much for the Challenges. The question may arise why accept them at all?

As everyone in this convocation knows the population of this world of ours is divided almost evenly between two great ideologies of life. One half, which includes us, adheres to the ideology of the Freedom of Individual man. The other half adheres to the ideology of Statism.

We all live together on this planet which has now become so small that some of our citizens can spin around it in an hour and a half and see it for what it is – a tiny fragile fragment of the universe on which all of us are travelling dangerously through infinity.

I say dangerously because if the two ideologies were to clash seriously some hundreds of millions of us could be dead in a moment, dead in what comfort it might give us to know that as we die, some hundreds of millions of statists are dying too.

Under such circumstances, the task of increasing emphasis upon the kind of education in the sciences, in the humanities and in religion which will enable us to understand our world in every sense assumes, indeed demands, a certain quickness of responsibility.

I do not wish, indeed I am not capable of embarking into the fields of theology or of political science, but it becomes

increasingly apparent that we humans on this planet called Earth may be the only humans in the Solar System and, indeed, may be the only creatures in the entire Universe with power to reason. Under such circumstances, it is astonishing that we have been doing our best for nearly 2 million years to eliminate each other.

Now, for the first time in our planet's history, we do indeed have the capability to undertake a complete annihilation. If that be the Divine wish then we are able to get on with it at any time. If, on the other hand, it is intended that this World of ours carry on we had better give more attention to that course of development.

I refer again to the blunt admonition of our Minister of Education perhaps in a much broader sense than he had in mind. Learn or perish. It would appear we must all learn, learn those basics to "Love thy neighbour" or suffer the alternative – perish – perish by any of several means we ourselves have devised. Let us learn, let us not perish.

I can assure you Sir George Williams will bear its full share in providing such education leading to better understanding of our world neighbours. Such understanding which we would hope would enable we citizens of Planet Earth to evolve in our respective ideologies, possibly meld the best features of the two and ultimately reach that Utopian goal of "Peace on Earth and good will toward all men."